

NEWSLETTER



US 8 Environmental Impact Statement

September 2003

WisDOT District 8 Newsletter Number 4

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If you have any questions or concerns about this project, contact any of the above representatives.

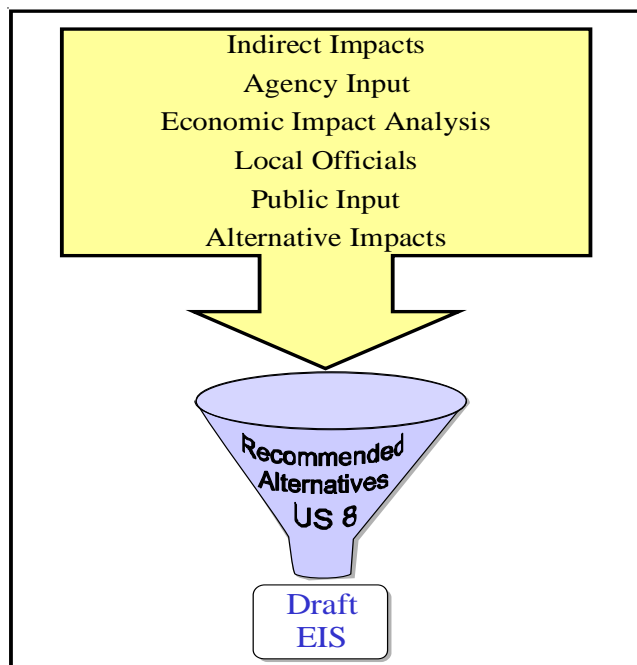
Overview

Over the past two years the US 8 EIS has moved through a needs assessment and into development of alternatives to meet the needs identified. Events held this summer and coming up this fall will take us into the final stages of alternative development and coordination with governmental and local agencies. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) document will be completed and published for public review in the spring of 2004.

→ New

The Draft EIS will present, for public comment, WisDOT-recommended alternatives to meet long term transportation needs of the 40-mile US 8 corridor. The Draft EIS will also describe all of the study alternatives and impacts. Following a forty-five day period when the draft EIS is available for public review, a public hearing will be held in Summer 2004. Once all the comments regarding the draft EIS have been properly addressed, the final version can be prepared. The Final EIS is expected by December 2004.

There are many areas of coordination and analysis to be finished before the Draft EIS is completed. Some of these areas are shown below.



The EIS document is a product of many areas of coordination and analysis.

This newsletter gives an overview of the activities remaining in 2003. For more details visit our website at www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/d8/eis/index.htm.

US 8 EIS 2003 DEVELOPMENTS CALENDAR

JUNE/JULY

Public Information Meetings Held in June in Turtle Lake and Barron

A third round of Public Information Meetings (PIM) was held in June that focused on the through-town route alternatives for the communities of Turtle Lake and Barron. Detailed maps and a comparison of impacts for bypass and through-town alternatives were discussed. Over 100 people attended the meeting in Turtle Lake and about 80 citizens turned out for Barron's meeting. The four-hour meetings had question and answer periods following formal presentations.

Comments from the meeting in Turtle Lake included:

- Many people appeared to be in favor of the through-town alternative based on concerns about bypass impacts to farmland, wetlands, and forested areas.
- Many raised concerns about access to homes and businesses with the through-town alternative.
- Some comments favored a south bypass and the belief it would be advantageous for community growth.

Comments from the meeting in Barron included:

- The through-town alternative had too many relocations and would impact too many people.
- A south bypass appears to be favored by many.
- A bypass would have economic impacts to existing Barron businesses.

Updates for other segments of the corridor were also presented. Design refinements and new alternative alignments included a route parallel and south of US 8 at Deer Lake and a realignment between Upper and Lower Turtle Lake. Based on comments received following the June meetings, an additional north realignment around Range was developed. For the latest alignments, please see the project website (address at bottom of page 1).



Citizens viewed alternative maps at the PIM in Barron.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

Local Input Obtained Throughout EIS Process

The study team will be meeting with a number of town boards along the corridor over the next several months to discuss alignment alternatives and potential impacts. Some towns have already prepared and passed resolutions in support of one alternative over others. Local officials and citizens are encouraged to provide input or ask questions through the duration of the US 8 study.



Archaeological field work will be conducted this fall.

Corridor Archaeology Survey

A team of archaeologists are doing field investigations to survey existing US 8 and the bypass alternative routes this fall. Results will include detailed information on important archaeological resources in the area and the impacts of the various US 8 alternatives. The archaeology survey will be completed by the end of November.

Economic Impact Analysis

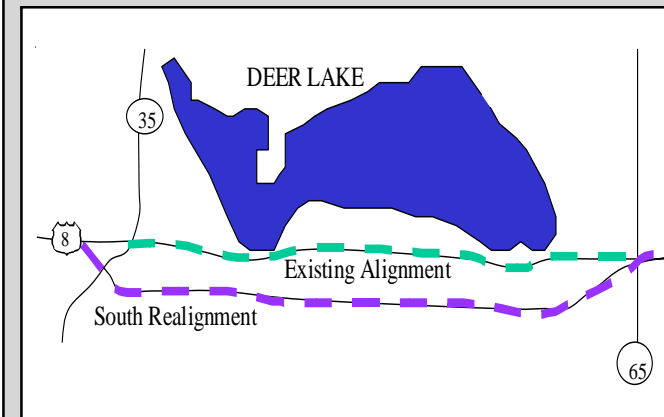
WisDOT is conducting a study to help determine economic impacts of the US 8 alternatives, including bypasses, on US 8 businesses. The analysis includes license plate surveys at area businesses in Barron and Turtle Lake to help understand how much local and non-local traffic frequent businesses along US 8. The economic study will be completed late this fall. Results will be a useful tool for assessing impacts of alternatives and will be included in the EIS document.

Indirect and Cumulative Impact Analysis

The EIS process includes several analyses that document the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the various improvement alternatives. One analysis required for the project is called an *indirect and cumulative impact analysis*. The purpose of this analysis is two-fold. First, it seeks to identify the expected land development patterns for the reasonably foreseeable future without the transportation improvement (no-build alternative). Second, it seeks to understand how development patterns would change with the implementation of the transportation improvements (build alternatives).

The study team will use expert panels and Delphi Surveys to conduct the indirect and cumulative impact analysis. Both techniques rely on local and regional representatives that have an understanding of, or a strong interest in, local land use development patterns and their relationship to transportation facilities. Expert panels will meet three times this fall. The Delphi Survey participants do not meet but respond via mail to three separate surveys about the project alternatives and how they may affect land development of other indirect impacts. The Delphi Survey members will see responses of the other participants as part of the third survey.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER



Local input is important: Two 4-lane alternatives are being studied in the Deer Lake area.

DECEMBER/JANUARY

Value Engineering

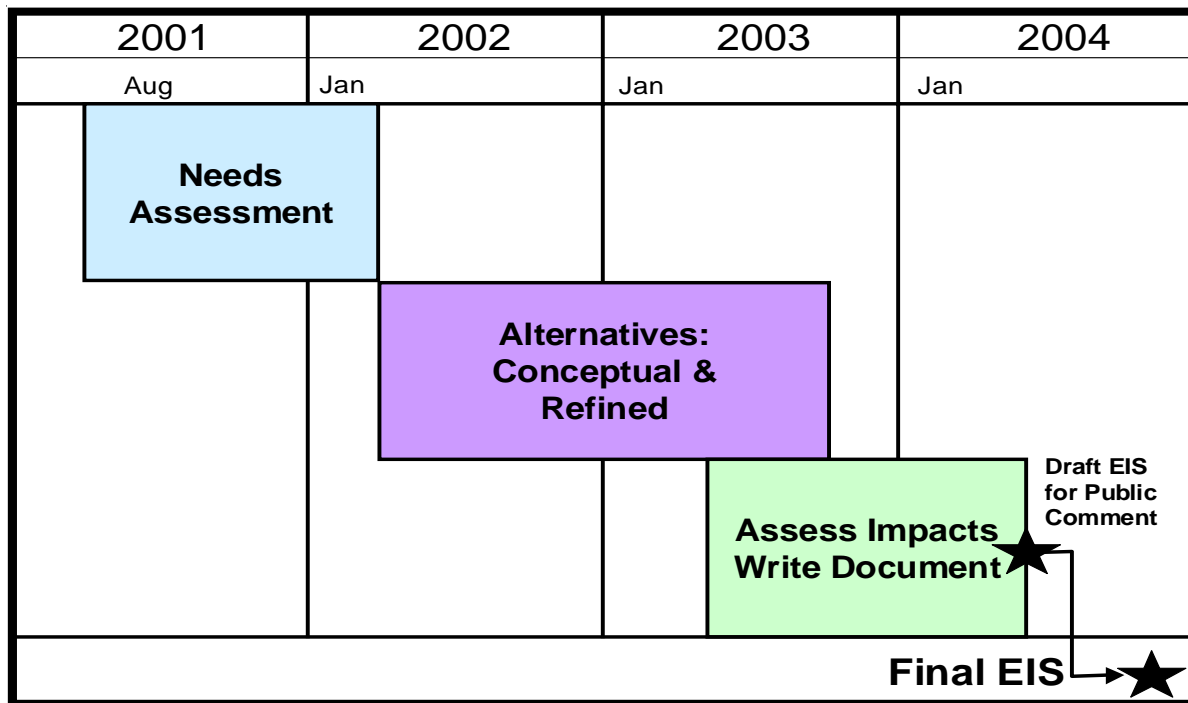
A Value Engineering (VE) study provides an independent review of project concepts and recommendations. A VE study can sometimes lead to solutions that provide higher value for the taxpayer at a lower cost. The VE study for the US 8 corridor will be conducted this fall. A VE study is required by the Federal Highway Administration for all WisDOT studies and design projects with construction costs over \$25 million.

$$\text{VALUE} = \frac{\text{FUNCTION}}{\text{COST}}$$

If the function can be increased or the cost decreased, a higher value for the project is realized.



WisDOT's economics impact analysis will look at businesses located along US 8.



US 8 EIS SCHEDULE

Inside:
US 8 WIS 35 (N) to US 53
EIS Newsletter

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